

NEWS CONFERENCE

792

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH PIERRE SALINGER

OCTOBER 22, 1962

8:02 P.M. EDT

MONDAY

MR. SALINGER: I would like to discuss several matters which emanate from the President's speech. First, politics --

Q. Is this all on the record?

MR. SALINGER: This is on the record, unless otherwise. The President and the Vice President have both cancelled all future political appearances during this campaign. They will make no further speeches during this campaign either in person or by proxy, such as telephone speeches.

Q. Does this include speeches on domestic issues?

MR. SALINGER: Yes. They are not going to participate any further in the campaign, either the President or the Vice President.

Q. This doesn't sound like it is subject to change or flexible.

MR. SALINGER: This is not subject to change.

Q. Pierre, can you clarify one thing? Will he go and vote in Boston?

MR. SALINGER: That I can't tell you, whether he will vote or vote absentee, which you can do in a general election but you can't do it in a primary. In other words, he cannot vote absentee in a primary in Massachusetts, but he can vote absentee in a general election. But he definitely will not participate any further in the campaign in 1962.

Q. Will he stay here in Washington?

MR. SALINGER: He plans to stay here, that is correct.

MR. SALINGER: I don't know.

Q. Is there any explanation of the President's reasoning on that, why he won't campaign any further?

MR. SALINGER: I think the President feels he has to be here.

Second, the President announces now the appointment of John J. McCloy as special advisor to Ambassador Adlai Stevenson in Ambassador Stevenson's capacity as the representative of the United States of America in the Security Council of the United Nations. Mr. McCloy will serve as special advisor to Ambassador Stevenson during United Nations' consideration of the Cuban situation.

Q. Will you repeat that, during what?

MR. SALINGER: During United Nations' consideration of the Cuban situation. Mr. McCloy, who retired on December 31, 1960, as Chairman of the Chase Manhattan Bank, has returned to the legal profession as counsel to Milbank, Tweed, Hope and Hadley, the law firm in downtown New York with which he was formerly associated.

Q. What was his last government assignment?

MR. SALINGER: His last government assignment was advisor to the President on disarmament matters.

Q. From when to when?

MR. SALINGER: He served in that post during most of 1961.

Q. You said he would act as Stevenson's assistant?

MR. SALINGER: No, advisor, special advisor.

Q. Do you have the address on that law firm?

MR. SALINGER: I do not.

Third, the President has asked the Members of Congress, the Senate and House, who met with him today, to remain in Washington. They all have agreed to do that. I believe that Congressman Morgan of Pennsylvania had a pressing matter that he had to return home, but the rest of them are staying in Washington. There is no set meeting with them, but they will be available should the President want to meet with them again.

Q. Indefinitely?

MR. SALINGER: Yes. There is no time set on it.

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MR. SALINGER: He plans to stay here, that is correct.

Q. What?

MR. SALINGER: He plans to remain here in Washington at least in the foreseeable future.

Q. Can the Vice President vote absentee?

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MR. SALINGER: Yes. There is no time set on it.

Q. I understood that Congressman Smathers said through Wednesday, and the briefing said that, I mean the report.

MR. SALINGER: There is no time set on it.

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Q. Are they expected to give up their political campaigns, Pierre?

MR. SALINGER: I don't think anybody has been asked to do that, no.

Q. How about Dirksen? Is he going to stay?

MR. SALINGER: They are all staying.

Q. Can you give us some indication of timing on the OAS and UN Security Council?

MR. SALINGER: These types of matters will come up at the State Department briefing which is on simultaneously. In other words, what I wanted to do was give you these three matters which are immediate White House follow-up, and the other matters as to implementation of the quarantine, diplomatic moves and so forth will be in the State and Defense Department briefings.

Q. How about the Brazil trip, Pierre?

MR. SALINGER: I have no new information on that.

Q. Does this no further campaign appearances extend to trips outside of town?

MR. SALINGER: Yes, sir.

Q. There will be none?

MR. SALINGER: That is correct.

Q. Can we have the names of all the Congressional leaders involved?

MR. SALINGER: Yes. I will try to do them from memory, if I can. They have all been on the wire for some time.

Q. I am sorry.

Q. Pierre, did the President talk to Mr. Eisenhower on this?

MR. SALINGER: The President talked today to President Eisenhower, President Truman and President Hoover.

Q. How about MacMillan?

MR. SALINGER: I have no comment on that.

Q. Did he just tell them what was coming out in the speech?

Q. Did he talk to Eisenhower yesterday before that appearance on television last night?

MR. SALINGER: The appearance on television last night as I understand was taped two or three days earlier. It has no relation.

Q. Was he in touch with Eisenhower in the past few days prior to the call this morning?

MR. SALINGER: No, but for BACKGROUND:

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President Eisenhower was in Washington yesterday and was given a briefing by the CIA, Mr. McCone, on the current situation.

Q. Was he called to Washington for that purpose?

MR. SALINGER: He came to Washington in returning from White Sulphur Springs, to my recollection, and I believe he was met by either Mr. McCone or one of his deputies, and went to the CIA and had that briefing.

Q. That was yesterday?

MR. SALINGER: That is right. That particular item is for BACKGROUND.

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Q. Pierre on the bottom of page three of the advance text of the speech there is an intriguing phrase when the President says "We will be glad to present our case to the UN, OAS", and so forth, "or any other meeting that could be useful".

Is that sort of an indirect invitation to Khrushchev?

MR. SALINGER: No, I wouldn't say that. I wouldn't want to amplify on that.

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Q. Did he just tell them what was coming out in the speech?

MR. SALINGER: That is right. He wanted to give them advance notice of what he was planning to do.

Q. Can you tell us roughly when he talked to them?

MR. SALINGER: I believe he talked to all of them this morning.

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... Fierre, in the first page of the text, it leads to several questions: whether there is a difference between "site", the word "site" and the word "installation."

In other words, are there now, to this Government's knowledge, actual medium-range ballistic missiles in Cuba or just the facilities, the bases being constructed?

MR. SALINGER: I will go on BACKGROUND on that, Smitty.

* * * * *

The Defense Department is going quite a bit into the intelligence in their briefing, but there are missiles, medium-range ballistic missiles, in Cuba now, as well as sites or facilities to launch them.

Q. Are they operational?

MR. SALINGER: I would rather let Defense handle the intelligence aspects of this matter.

* * * * *

Q. There is a large question on the quarantine as to how it can be applied without stopping all vessels, shall we say, to determine what is aboard.

MR. SALINGER: Again, you are posing what is a legal and procedural question, both of which are being answered in the State and Defense Department briefings.

Q. Are there intermediate-range missiles in Cuba to this Government's knowledge?

MR. SALINGER: Again, I would refer that question to the Defense Department. I will leave that for them.

Q. How about nuclear warheads?

MR. SALINGER: Those are all questions which I think should be directed to the Defense Department.

Q. To amplify on your answer before this, what is the distinction between a quarantine and blockade?

MR. SALINGER: That is a question which I would leave to the experts at the State Department.

Q. Could you amplify or clear up one thing? In that same first section, the first step, where he states in the third sentence the quarantine will be extended if needed to other types of cargo and carriers, we would read that, if necessary, applying to aircraft, the only other type of carrier than ships are planes.

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MR. SALINGER: OFF THE RECORD, I believe that reasoning would be correct, but I don't want to be quoted as saying that. If you read that into it, you would be reading it accurately in the speech.

* * * * *

Q. Does that quarantine mean they will be stopping all ships to see what they are carrying?

MR. SALINGER: Again, I would prefer you see the experts at the State Department to answer this question.

Q. Have they invoked this at all?

MR. SALINGER: That is another question they can answer.

Q. What can you tell us about Tuesday at 9:00 o'clock?

MR. SALINGER: That is an intelligence matter, and I would just as soon that they answer the intelligence questions.

Q. Can you tell us whether the President told Gromyko, whether he had this information on Thursday and what he said about it?

MR. SALINGER: I can't answer that.

Q. Can you tell us when the President made the --

MR. SALINGER: Hold on just a minute.

He did not tell Mr. Gromyko that.

Q. Is it still true that he came back, that the President came back because of a cold?

MR. SALINGER: I will let you answer that question.

Q. Wait a minute. I think that is important. I would like to know. Did the President come back because of this crisis?

MR. SALINGER: The President had a cold.

Q. Did he come back because of this crisis?

MR. SALINGER: The President had a cold. I am not going to go beyond that.

Q. I didn't hear the remark about Gromyko. Did you say he did not discuss it with Gromyko?

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MR. SALINGER: He did not tell Gromyko the information we had.

Q. Did Gromyko leave for the Soviet Union today not knowing anything about this situation?

MR. SALINGER: I don't know. You will have to ask Gromyko that.

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Q. In other words, the President did not call Gromyko a liar to his face.

Q.
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Q. Is the White House staff or any other Administration official going on any sort of special duty now from this situation?

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MR. SALINGER: I think we will have to watch the developments, but I would think there would be somebody around the White House and State Department and Defense Department most of the time.

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Q. Pierre, is the President giving any thought to calling the entire Congress back?

MR. SALINGER: I have not heard that subject discussed yet.

Q. Is he getting any immediate telephone reaction or other reaction?

MR. SALINGER: Well, I haven't had an opportunity to talk to the President since his speech.

Q. Apart from what the President said in calling upon Chairman Khrushchev in his speech, has he sent any personal message to Khrushchev or is he sending one with respect to this Cuban situation?

MR. SALINGER: Is the President sending a message? No, he has not.

Q. Does he intend to?

Q. Pierre, has any thought been given as to how we can cover some of this blockade, going down there, or whether communiquees will be issued?

MR. SALINGER: That is a subject that you will have to address to the Defense Department. They have the operational control on that matter.

Q. How about communiquees issued with some regularity on the blockade or something of that sort?

MR. SALINGER: I am sure that we will keep you apprised of developments through various channels.

Q. Pierre, is the President now giving any consideration to appearing himself before the UN?

MR. SALINGER: I have not heard that either.

Q. Do you know when the Security Council will meet?

MR. SALINGER: I saw on the wire that Mr. Stevenson asked them to meet tomorrow morning. I don't know whether they have agreed to do that.

Q. You say the President has not sent a message to Khrushchev. Will he, or is the extent of his calling upon the Soviet Premier to sit down contained in this speech?

MR. SALINGER: I don't know of any present plan to send a message to him.

Q. Was he given a copy of the speech when he called?

MR. SALINGER: I think we will have to watch the developments, but I would think there would be somebody around the White House and State Department and Defense Department most of the time.

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MR. SALINGER: Indefinite.

Q. Can you tell us anything at all about conversations or communications the President has had with other chiefs of state?

MR. SALINGER: No, I cannot.

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MR. SALINGER: I would rather you ask the State Department that question.

Q. Was the speech drafted entirely today?

MR. SALINGER: It was worked on a couple of days.

Q. Is Chancellor Adenauer's visit still scheduled?

MR. SALINGER: It is still scheduled; yes.

Q. All other things in the schedule are the same?

MR. SALINGER: I don't know of any additions.

Q. Any addition to his tomorrow's schedule?

MR. SALINGER: No. He will see the representative from Jamaica at noon. The rest of the day is open.

Q. Has he telephoned Governor Brown or any other executives of the States that he was to visit before?

MR. SALINGER: I am not aware that he has.

Q. Can you tell us what States he has wiped out in this -- what trips?

MR. SALINGER: I will tell you what States are wiped out that I know of. The words "wiped out" are maybe an unfortunate choice. Wyoming, Utah, Idaho, Oregon, a return to Pennsylvania, a return to New York, a return to Connecticut, a return to Michigan. I said California, Oregon and California.

Q. Washington?

MR. SALINGER: He was not going to Washington.

Q. Wyoming?

MR. SALINGER: That was the first one I named.

Q. Wisconsin?

MR. SALINGER: Well, that was, of course, left up in the air, although he hoped to go to Wisconsin as well as back to Missouri.

Q. Pierre, could you speculate with us what is the next logical step if nothing happens, if this doesn't get results?

MR. SALINGER: No, I am not in charge of speculation. That is your job.

Q. What are the prospects for a news conference this week?

MR. SALINGER: There will be no news conference this week.

Q. Are you expecting anything else tonight?

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